

SECTION 9

Public Participation

This section includes information on the following required element:

Element 8: Congress has affirmed through WCRP and SWG, that broad public participation is an essential element of developing and implementing the CWCS, the projects that are carried out while the CWCS is developed, and the Species of Conservation Priority that Congress has indicated such programs and projects are intended to emphasize.

9.1 The Public Considered

Interpretation of Element 8 and the public:

- “Public” in this instance is defined as the people of North Dakota as a whole.
- “Participation” in this instance is defined as the act of informing or involving.

9.2 The Overall Process

The mission of the North Dakota Game and Fish Department is to protect, conserve, and enhance fish and wildlife populations and their habitats for sustained public consumptive and nonconsumptive use. It is the NDGFD’s responsibility to be the principle governmental proponent for fish and wildlife populations and their habitat by aggressively conserving and enhancing these resources and protecting them from irreversible harm to ensure their existence in perpetuity for the citizens of the state. With this responsibility, the NDGFD has an obvious need to keep the public informed and provide a mechanism for input on fish and wildlife issues within the state and from a national perspective as well.

The NDGFD’s Communication Section has several means of providing information to the public. At some point in the past few years, all of these tools have been used to inform the public of SWG issues and keep them updated on the status of the CWCS. The NDGFD’s weekly newsletter is released every Wednesday to 200 media outlets (e.g. TV, radio, and newspapers) throughout the state, and to 1,700 other out-of-state subscribers. A brief weekly audio news release is also played on radio stations throughout the state, reaching about 50,000 people. *North Dakota Outdoors* magazine is the official publication of the NDGFD. It is published 10 times a year and is received by about 30,000 households. *North Dakota Outdoors* television is played weekly throughout the state on local news. These interesting two-minute programs feature a variety of outdoor topics from North Dakota’s habitats and the wildlife that depends on them to unusual outdoor personalities. An estimated 125,000 people see the program each week. *North Dakota Outdoors Live!* radio program is on every Saturday morning from 11:00 a.m. to noon. Roughly 20,000 people listen in to hear the latest happenings in the NDGFD and other issues affecting fish and wildlife. *Watchable Wildlife Notes* is a publication for wildlife viewers published twice a year. About 4,500 wildlife enthusiasts subscribe to the publication. The NDGFD also maintains a home web page that provides a multitude of information about numerous fish and wildlife issues.

9.2.a Continued Public Involvement

Providing information to the public, receiving feedback, or answering questions and concerns will not end with this CWCS. The public will continue to be informed and educated on the progress of the CWCS, research projects, and other strides in conservation for SoCP with many of the same tools listed above. With the growing number of wildlife watchers in North Dakota, an increase in nongame wildlife awareness and interest over time is anticipated.

9.3 Public Information Exchange

The following provides instances of what, how, where, and when the NDGFD distributed information to the public on SWG issues and the state CWCS.

Message: Game and Fish Hires Two New Biologists. Will be working extensively on helping the agency develop a conservation plan and collect baseline data for nongame species.
Media: NDGFD weekly newsletter
Who: 1,900 total subscribers, 200 media sources in North Dakota
When: June 2002

Message: Nongame Biologists Hired. To improve the state's resource base on nongame species...development of a statewide conservation plan...to prevent species from serious declines.
Media: *Watchable Wildlife Notes*
Who: 4,500 subscribers
When: Spring 2002

Message: Discussion of current nongame issues; CARA, WCRP, bluebirds, nongame biologists, morel mushrooms.
Media: *North Dakota Outdoors* radio program
Who: 20,000 listeners on 5 major AM radio stations
When: June 8, 2002

Message: Going to the Dogs. Three minute video on black-tailed prairie dog status and monitoring, a project funded with WCRP.
Media: *North Dakota Outdoors* television news program
Who: 125,000 North Dakota residents
When: June 2002

Message: Field trip to look at nongame habitat, issues, and emphasize the need for SWG to include outreach and education.
Where: Shenyenne National Grasslands, USFS
Who: Senator Byron Dorgan's staff
When: August 14, 2002

Message: Conservation and Management of Nongame Wildlife in North Dakota: A North Dakota Game and Fish Department Perspective.
Media: Dakota Zoo, Bismarck
Who: 30 members of Bismarck-Mandan Bird Club
When: January 3, 2003

Message: Don't Slash Wildlife Grants – Editorial “the program works in North Dakota and other states and should be fully funded.”
Media: *The Forum*
Who: Subscribers of Fargo newspaper
When: February 11, 2003

Message: Federal Wildlife Grants Important to At-Risk Species.
Media: NDGFD weekly newsletter
Who: 1,900 total subscribers, 200 media sources in North Dakota
When: March 12, 2003

Message: State Wildlife Grants. Contact your Congressman...tell them our wildlife needs reliable funding to maintain state wildlife projects already underway and to help conserve our wildlife species.
Media: *Watchable Wildlife Notes*
Who: 4,500 subscribers
When: Spring 2003

Message: Caring for North Dakota's Nongame Species. An introduction to CARA, WCRP, SWG, and how North Dakota is utilizing the funds.
Media: *North Dakota Outdoors* magazine
Who: 30,000 subscribers
When: July 2003

Message: Field trip to view a golden eagle project funded with SWG, and discuss other related issues in North Dakota.
Where: The badlands of North Dakota
Who: Senator Byron Dorgan's staff, including Committee on Appropriations staff
When: August 20, 2003

Message: State Wildlife Grants helping to prevent species declines.
Media: Audio news release
Who: 50,000 listeners on AM radio stations across the state
When: December 1, 2003

Message: Congress Gives Boost to North Dakota's Wildlife Program. Putting these dollars to work now will save taxpayers money in the future.

Media: NDGFD weekly newsletter

Who: 1,900 total subscribers, 200 media sources in North Dakota

When: December 3, 2003

Message: Grant Program Helps N.D. Manage Nongame Species. An article on the golden eagle study funded with SWG and how SWG is providing funding for other nongame species of concern.

Media: Doug Leier's Outdoor Column

Who: Newspaper subscribers across the state

When: December 2003

Message: Review and comment period for Version 2.0 Draft Species of Conservation Priority for North Dakota. Comments on species to include/exclude on the list were received by roughly 1/3 of the recipients by March 31.

Media: NDGFD publication

Who: 65 groups comprised of agencies, non-governmental organizations, tribal, academia, and experts from the public

When: February 25, 2004

Message: State Wildlife Grants Update.

Media: *Watchable Wildlife Notes*

Who: 4,500 subscribers

When: Spring 2004

Message: Badlands Field Trip Scheduled in July. Highlight some recent projects established by the department's nongame biologists through State Wildlife Grants.

Media: NDGFD weekly newsletter

Who: 1,900 total subscribers, 200 media sources in North Dakota

When: June 16, 2004

Message: North Dakota's 100 Species of Conservation Priority – What Are They? Profiles the species North Dakota identified as those in the greatest need of conservation. Also, contact information was provided for those wishing to provide input on the CWCS process.

Media: *North Dakota Outdoors* magazine

Who: 30,000 subscribers

When: July 2004

Message: Nongame Time, Although Not Game Animals, These Species Hardly a Nonfactor. On the front page of Outdoors section.

Media: *Bismarck Tribune*

Who: Subscribers of Bismarck newspaper

When: July 21, 2004

Message: Badlands Field Trip – Two-day trip focused on nongame species issues and the SWG program.

Where: The badlands of North Dakota

Who: 25 members from the general public

When: July 23 -24, 2004

Message: Badlands Tour. Three minute video on the badlands field trip geared toward SWG program.

Media: *North Dakota Outdoors* television news program

Who: 125,000 North Dakota residents

When: July 2004

Message: The SWG program in North Dakota and a discussion on the incidental report form

Where: Valley City, ND.

Who: 15 members of the North Dakota Birding Society

When: September 25, 2004

Message: Development and implementation of an Incidental Report System. This web-based application, developed in conjunction with the North Dakota Natural Heritage Program and funded with SWG, allows for any member of the public to report incidental sightings of species of conservation priority.

Where: Statewide

Who: All members of the public

When: October 2004

Message: Mid-winter Bald Eagle Survey update and how to report species of conservation priority on the incidental report form.

Media: *North Dakota Outdoors* radio program

Who: 20,000 listeners on 5 major AM radio stations

When: January 29, 2005

Message: Reptiles and Amphibians of North Dakota and those that are species of conservation priority.

Media: NDGFD Wildlife Wednesdays

Who: 160 total participants, 100 kids and 60 adults

When: February 2, 2005

Message: Birds and Their Nests and those that are species of conservation priority.

Media: NDGFD Wildlife Wednesdays

Who: 130 total participants, 80 kids and 50 adults

When: February 16, 2005

Message: NDGFD Seeking Public Comment on CWCS.

Media: NDGFD Outreach Biologist Jeb Williams's weekly radio show

Who: Listeners in Bismarck/Mandan area

When: May 14, 2005

Message: NDGFD is seeking comments on a strategic plan designed to identify and help fish and wildlife species that are in decline.

Media: Audio news release

Who: 50,000 listeners on AM radio stations across the state

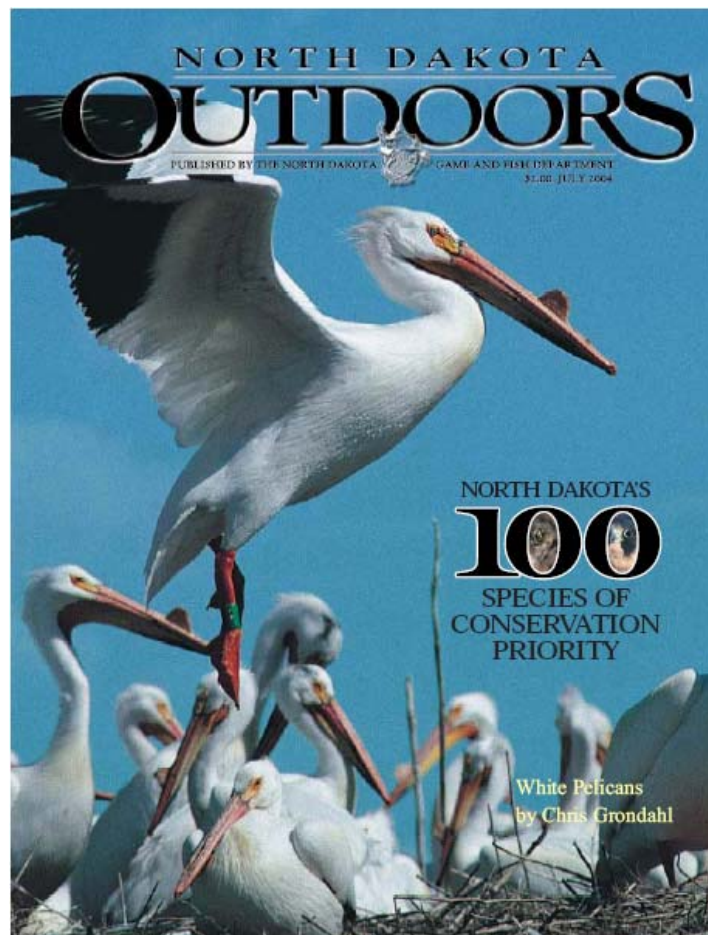
When: May 15, 2005

Message: NDGFD Seeking Public Comment on CWCS.

Media: *North Dakota Outdoors* radio program

Who: 20,000 listeners on 5 major AM radio stations

When: June 18, 2005



The front cover of the widely distributed July 2004 issue of North Dakota Outdoors magazine which was nearly entirely devoted to SoCP and the initiation of the CWCS.

9.4 Wildlife Values in the West 2004 – Preliminary Findings

Beginning in 2004, a survey conducted cooperatively by Colorado State University and the North Dakota Game and Fish Department was mailed to a sample of 3,000 North Dakota residents. Of those surveys, 715 completed surveys were returned. The survey covered a broad range of fish and wildlife issues, from water resources to chronic wasting disease. Five questions were directed at categorizing residents' knowledge about game and nongame, how important it is to protect nongame from becoming rare, endangered or extinct, and where funding for such protection should come from.

Results reported were obtained from weighted data, i.e., from data weighted to accurately reflect the state's population characteristics. Data were weighted on the basis of age (using *U.S. Census 2000 projections*) and participation in wildlife-related recreation (estimates from the *USFWS 2001 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation*). The preliminary results from this report provides a general view of how North Dakota residents view game and nongame conservation and opinions as to where it is acceptable to obtain non-federal match for nongame projects from. Preliminary results from this report are as follows (*Valid Percent and (Frequency)*):

4. How would you categorize your knowledge of fish and wildlife in North Dakota?

I'd categorize my knowledge about...	Not at All Knowledgeable	Slightly Knowledgeable	Moderately Knowledgeable	Quite Knowledgeable	Extremely Knowledgeable
Game.	12.1% (84)	30.7% (213)	31.7% (220)	20.8% (144)	4.6% (32)
NDG&F efforts to protect game.	25.8% (178)	32.6% (225)	25.9% (179)	13.5% (93)	2.1% (15)
Nongame.	29.8% (206)	37.0% (255)	23.2% (160)	9.3% (64)	0.7% (5)
NDG&F efforts to protect nongame.	40.6% (280)	32.0% (220)	20.5% (141)	6.5% (45)	0.5% (3)

5. Please indicate the importance of the following statements to you.

It is important to me that...	Not at All Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Quite Important	Extremely Important
North Dakota protects as many types of fish and wildlife as possible.	2.2% (15)	12.6% (88)	27.3% (191)	39.0% (272)	18.9% (132)
North Dakota keeps nongame from becoming rare, endangered or extinct.	2.7% (19)	11.1% (78)	24.7% (172)	37.0% (258)	24.5% (171)
North Dakota maintains levels of waters in rivers, streams, and lakes that are sufficient for the protection of fish and other water-dependent animals.	0.8% (6)	5.1% (36)	17.8% (124)	39.8% (277)	36.5% (254)

6. NDG&F has various management projects to protect game and nongame. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about these projects.

Do you disagree or agree that...	Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither	Slightly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
The NDG&F efforts to protect nongame fish and wildlife are adequate.	0.7% (5)	1.0% (7)	4.2% (29)	40.2% (277)	22.9% (158)	27.1% (187)	4.0% (28)
Projects designed to benefit nongame fish and wildlife will benefit game as well.	0.4% (3)	1.0% (7)	2.2% (15)	25.3% (175)	24.8% (171)	32.6% (225)	13.8% (96)

7. North Dakota is required to match federal funds with state money to pay for protection of nongame fish and wildlife. Several possible sources for the state money to match federal funds for these programs have been suggested. There are differences of opinion about how these programs should be funded.

It is unacceptable or acceptable to...	Highly Unacceptable	Moderately Unacceptable	Slightly Unacceptable	Neither	Slightly Acceptable	Moderately Acceptable	Highly Acceptable
A) Use only money from people who hunt or fish?	15.1% (104)	15.1% (104)	17.6% (122)	7.1% (49)	16.5% (114)	16.2% (112)	12.4% (86)
B) Use a portion of revenue presently being collected from taxes?	4.5% (31)	5.3% (37)	10.3% (71)	6.2% (43)	40.3% (279)	26.3% (182)	7.0% (49)
C) Use new taxes or an increase in existing taxes?	25.7% (178)	19.5% (135)	14.5% (100)	15.8% (109)	18.3% (127)	4.3% (30)	1.8% (13)
D) Use only money from voluntary contributions?	14.6% (101)	17.0% (118)	16.9% (117)	13.2% (91)	16.5% (114)	12.6% (87)	9.3% (64)
E) Spend no money to keep nongame from becoming rare, endangered or extinct?	51.9% (360)	18.0% (125)	14.3% (99)	8.4% (58)	2.7% (19)	2.6% (18)	2.0% (14)

8. Of the options listed in #7 above (A to E), which source of money do you prefer to be used to pay for projects to keep nongame from becoming rare, endangered or extinct?

A	B	C	D	E
23.3% (123)	56.3% (298)	5.7% (30)	12.0% (64)	2.6% (14)

Teel, T. L., and A. A. Dayer. 2005. Preliminary State-Specific Results from the Research Project Entitled "Wildlife Values in the West 2004". Fort Collins, CO: Human Dimensions in Natural Resources Unit, Colorado State University.

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APPENDIX A

Species of Conservation Priority Accounts

KEY TO SPECIES ACCOUNTS

The following sub-appendices (A.1 – A.5) are species accounts of North Dakota's 100 Species of Conservation Priority. They were developed to provide CWCS users with a summary of pertinent biological information. A secondary purpose of these accounts is to fulfill the requirements set forth by Congress for the CWCS.

It's worth noting that all bird and herptile accounts contain some management recommendations while most of the small mammals, fish and mussel accounts do not. Considerably more work has been performed on certain taxa (i.e., birds) than others. Consequently, more is known about the types of land treatments or conservation actions needed in order to benefit or sustain those populations. Rather than leave this information out of the CWCS simply because we took a landscape based approach, we provided these management recommendations for those individuals or partners who might have a particular interest in a single species. As we learn more about habitat requirements and issues limiting other species, we intend to refine or add these recommendations.

Appendix E also provides additional information on the effects of management practices on birds. This appendix will be refined with input from bird experts and may eventually serve as a key tool for use in implementing the CWCS.

The following two pages outline a sample species account. Descriptions of the items are italicized.